tion of granting the benefits to these staff artistes also especially those who retired after putting in more than 20 years of service; and

(d) if not, what are the reasons therefor ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) : (a) and (b) Government have decided that the Staff Artistes of All India Radio and Doordarshan who are already eligible for retirement benefits like those under the Contributory Provident Fund, Gratuity etc. should be eligible for receiving pension instead of C.P.F. benefits. For this purpose the Staff Artistes have been divided in two categories :

(1) Those 'Artistes' who have to perform before the mike or appear before the T.V. Screen and (2) those who are performing duties similar to those performed by regular Government Servants.

Both the categories have been made eligible for pension on the basis of their option and a screening. The former category will continue to contract, but attractive terms and conditions have been prescribed.

No category of Staff Artistes has been excluded from the pensionary benefits.

(c) Under the above Scheme Staff Artists who retire after putting more than 20 years service would be eligible for pension. In fact for the 'Artists' category pensionary benefits become available even after 10 years of service.

(d) Does not arise.

Conference of Non-Aligned Information Ministers in Senegal

20. SHRI BHAGATRAM MANHAR : Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state :

(a) whether a conference of the Information Ministers of the Non-Aligned countries was held in the capital of Senegal in January this year.

(b) whether the Prime Minister as Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement sent a message to the conference of international co-operation amongst members of the NAM in the matter of collection and dissemination of information and publicity with a view to promoting solidarity and amity amongst the member-countries and maintaining world peace, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what was the response of the conference to the message ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRI V.N. GADGIL) : (a) The eighth session of the Inter-Governmental Council of the Information Ministers of Non-Aligned Countries was held in Dakar (Senegal) from 9th to 12th January 1986.

(b) The Prime Minister in this capacity as the Chairman of the Non-Aligned Movement had sent a Message to the Conference mentioned at (a) above. The text of the Message is given in the annexed statement (*see* below).

(c) The Message was very well appreciated and the Conference unanimously decided to adopt it as an official document.

Statement

The Prime Minister in his capacity as the Chairman of Non-Aligned Movement had sent the following Message to the Conference :

"The overriding concerns of the Nonaligned Movement are to preserve international peace, promote the freedom and sovereignty of nations still subjected to the denial of their rights, and secure economic justice for all peoples. Non-aligned countries must strengthen cooperation among themselves

in the political, economic and cultural fields for the achievement of these objectives.

These tasks require greater exchange of information. The role of the Inter-Governmental Council of the Information Ministers of Nonaligned Countries is to promote such exchange. I am glad to know that the eighth meeting of the Council is being held in Dakar.

The Non-aligned Summit in New Delhi listed a number of specific measures to enable non-aligned countries to achieve media cooperation and the decolonization of information. We have called for a New International Information and Communication Order. I am confident that the Conference in Dakar will help our Movement. My best wishes for its success."

21. [*Transferred to the 3rd March 1986*]

Damage to wheat crop by weedicides

22. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK :
SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA :

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item appearing in the "Indian Express" on the 17th January, 1986 to the effect that some of the weedicides in the 75 per cent formulation groups caused considerable damage to the standing wheat crops in Punjab;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) what action Government have taken in this regard ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION (SHRI YOGENDRA MAKWANA) (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Immediately after receiving the information, a team consisting of the experts from the Central Directorate of Plant Protection, Quarantine and Storage, the State Department of Agriculture, Punjab and Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana, was deputed to study the situation. The Team surveyed the areas of the wheat crop alleged to have been damaged due to application of weedicide (isoproturon 75% WP).

The team observed that the general condition of the wheat crop in the districts of Ludhiana and Ropar was very good and there was satisfactory control of *Phalaris minor* weeds to the advantage of the yield factor. There were no adverse reports from other districts, according to the State Government. Out of the total area of 15 lakh acres on which Isoproturon (the formulations 75% and 50% W.P.) had been used, damage was reported in about 150 acres partially. Weedicides were applied a few days before the rains on the 25th and 26th December, 1985 in these fields. Due to rains, weedicides were washed away with the rain water and the water stagnated in certain low lying patches which led to heavy concentration of pesticides resulting in localised damage to the crops. Similarly, some damage was caused to the wheat in sandy soils due to percolation of the rain water having high concentration of the weedicides to the root zone.

Partially even the affected crops recovered after a few days.

Nothing has been found wrong with the weedicides used.

Intensive fertiliser promotion campaign

23. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK :
SHRI SHANKER SINH VAGHELA :

Will the Minister of AGRICUL-